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1. Poetry, American.

PICTURE POEMS

FOR

YOUNG FOLKS

BY

MARIAN DOUGLAS *repeated*

Robinson, Anne Douglas (Gibson)

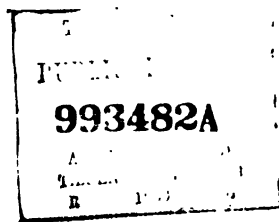
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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1872

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RIVERSIDE, CAMBRIDGE:
STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED BY
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To
HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN,
THE DELIGHT OF MY CHILDHOOD
THIS LITTLE BOOK
OF CHILDHOOD'S OWN VERSES
IS MOST GRATEFULLY
DEDICATED.

WQR 19 FEB '36

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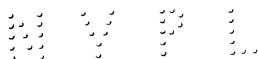
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THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE north winds blow
O'er drifts of snow ;
Out in the cold who goes from here ?
"Good-by, Good-by !"
Loud voices cry.
"Good-by !" returns the gray Old Year ;
But, looking back, what word leaves he ?
"O, you must all good children be !"

A knock, a knock !
'Tis twelve o'clock !
This time of night, pray, who comes here ?
O, now I see !
'Tis he ! 'tis he !
All people know the glad New Year !
What has he brought ? and what says he ?
"O, you must all good children be !"





MY WINTER FRIEND.

THE chickadee, the chickadee, —
A chosen friend of mine is he.
His head and throat are glossy black;
He wears a gray coat on his back;
His vest is light, — 'tis almost white;
His eyes are round and clear and bright.

He picks the seeds from withered weeds;
Upon my table-crumbs he feeds;
He comes and goes through falling snows;
The freezing wind around him blows, —
He heeds it not: his heart is gay
As if it were the breeze of May

MY WINTER FRIEND.

3

*The whole day long he sings one song,
Though dark the sky may be;
And better than all other birds
I love the chickadee!*

The bluebird coming in the spring,
The goldfinch with his yellow wing,
The humming-bird that feeds on pinks
And roses, and the bobolinks,
The robins gay, the sparrows gray, —
They all delight me while they stay.

But when, ah me! they chance to see
A red leaf on the maple-tree,
They all cry, "O, we dread the snow!"
And spread their wings in haste to go;
And when they all have southward flown,
The chickadee remains alone.

*A bird that stays in wintry days,
A friend¹ indeed is he;
And better than all other birds
I love the chickadee!*

TOM'S OPINION.

THE windows are white and the wind whistles loud,
And close round the fireplace the old people crowd.
"What a dreary cold day!"

They all shivering say:

But for me, though I know, with the birds and the bees,
The ripe cherries and berries, and tall shady trees,
That the summer is pleasant enough in its way,
Take the year as it goes, let them say what they will,
There is nothing quite equal to sliding down hill.
When boys are together,
Hurrah for cold weather!
There is nothing like winter and sliding down hill!

A good game of ball is a capital thing
To keep up one's spirits, I think, in the spring;
When the wind is just right
I like flying a kite;
I would make no objections to owning a gun,
And in going out rowing there's plenty of fun;
And then, fishing is jolly when fishes will bite,—
But to take the year through, let them say what they will,
There is nothing quite equal to sliding down hill
To birds of *my* feather!
Hurrah for cold weather!
There is nothing like winter and sliding down hill!

IF YOU PLEASE.

I.

ALL dressed in gray, a little mouse
Has made his home within my house;
And every night, and every morn,
I say, "I wish that mouse were gone!"
But why? A quiet soul is he
As any one need wish to see.
My house is large, my hearth is wide,
With room for him and me beside.
Ah, yes! But, when the lights are out,
He likes to slyly peep about,
And help himself to what he sees,
Without once saying, "If you please."

II.

I've food enough, and food to spare:
I'm willing he should have his share.
There's corn my woodshed chamber in,
And turnips fill my cellar-bin;
I've thirteen squashes all laid by
To keep where they are warm and dry;
And who can boast a finer show
Of apple barrels in a row!

He might have part from all of these,
Would he say only, "If you please."

III.

But, O, when I've blown out the light,
He wanders round the house at night,
And looks at this, and tastes of that:
He knows I do not keep a cat.
My winter-pears bear marks of teeth;
He gnawed a hole my door beneath;
He got upon the pantry shelf,
Knocked down my tins, and helped himself;
And left, to show he had been by,
His footprints on a custard-pie!
He nibbled at my currant-tarts,
And ginger-cookies cut in hearts;
And made a feast upon a cheese,
Without once saying, "If you please."

IV.

And this is why, that night and morn,
I wish my lodger would be gone.
I have no place for one to stay
Beneath my roof, who cannot say,
Before he takes a thing he sees
To be another's, "If you please."

CRYING ALOUD.

IS the yellow-bird dead?
'Lay your dear little head
Close, close to my heart, and weep, precious one, there,
While your beautiful hair
On my bosom lies bright as a sun-lighted cloud.
No, you need not keep still;
You may sob at your will;
There is some little comfort in crying aloud.

But the days, they will come,
When your grief must be dumb;
Grown women, like me, must take care how we cry;
You will learn, by and by,
'Tis a womanly art to hide pain out of sight,
To look round with a smile,
Though your heart ache the while,
And to keep back your tears till you've blown out the light!

O, the woes we can tell
We can bear very well,—
Rehearse them, indeed, with a measure of pride;
'Tis the pain we must hide,
By which silently, surely, the spirit is bowed.
Then, dear love, while you may,
Give to grief its full way,
And enjoy the poor comfort of crying aloud!

THE MOTHERLESS TURKEYS.

THE White Turkey was dead! The White Turkey was dead!

How the news through the barn-yard went flying!
Of a mother bereft, four small turkeys were left,
And their case for assistance was crying.
E'en the Peacock respectfully folded his tail,
As a suitable symbol of sorrow,
And his plainer wife said, "Now the old bird is dead,
Who will tend her poor chicks on the morrow?
And when evening around them comes dreary and chill
Who above them will watchfully hover?"
"Two each night I will tuck 'neath my wings," said the Duck,
"Though I've eight of my own I must cover!"
"I have *so much* to do! For the bugs and the worms,
In the yard it is tiresome pickin';
I have nothing to spare,—for my own I must care,"
Said the Hen with one chicken.

"How I wish," said the Goose, "I could be of some use,
For my heart is with love over-brimming;
The next morning that's fine, they shall go with my nine
Little, yellow-backed goslings, out swimming!"
"I will do what I can," the old Dorking put in,
"And for help they may call upon me too,

Though I've ten of my own that are only half grown,
And a great deal of trouble to see to.
But those poor little things, they are all heads and wings,
And their bones through their feathers are stickin'!"
"Very hard it may be, but, O, don't come to me!"
Said the Hen with one chicken.

"Half my care, I suppose, there is nobody knows, —
I'm the most overburdened of mothers!
They must learn, little elves! how to scratch for themselves,
And not seek to depend upon others."
She went by with a cluck, and the Goose to the Duck
Exclaimed, in surprise, "Well, I never!"
Said the Duck, "I declare, those who have the least care,
You will find, are complaining forever!
And when all things appear to look threatening and drear,
And when troubles your pathway are thick in,
For some aid in your woe, O, beware how you go
To a hen with one chicken!"



THE FIRST ROBIN.

“O BILLY! Billy! Billy!
I know 'twill soon be spring!”

“And pray how do you know it?”

“I’ve heard a robin sing.

“The snow is in the meadow still,
The wind is piping loud and shrill;
But to the garden cherry-tree
He came, this morn, and sang to me.

“And thus he sang: ‘I’ve come at last,
And spring is following sure and fast:

She'll soon be here (look out! look out!)
To scatter blossoms all about!

“Bright daffodils will nod their heads,
And pinks make sweet your garden beds;
Like stars will dandelions shine,
And red buds swell upon the vine;
And from the green grass will look up
The yellow, yellow buttercup.

“Tall ferns will wave the brook beside,
Thick leaves the maple boughs will hide;
And safe among them, glad and blest,
My mate and I will build our nest.’

“O! snows may fall and winds may roar,
But winter-time is almost o’er:
Upon the garden cherry-tree
I’ve heard a robin sing;
And Billy! Billy! Billy!
I know ’twill soon be spring.”

“HEAR IT AND WISH.”

THE herald note of summer days,
How full and clear it rings !
Hark ! when you hear it you must wish,—
The year's first robin sings !

What shall I wish? Put by the thought
That looks to self alone ;
But wishing for another's good
Is praying for one's own.

POLITICS.

BILL MORE and I, in days gone by,
Were friends the long year through,
Save when, above the melting snow,
Wild March his trumpet blew.

Outspoken foes, we then arose ;
Each chose a different way ;
For March, to our New Hampshire hills,
Brings back town-meeting day.

Its gingerbread and oranges,
Alike, on Bill and me,
That day bestowed, but only one
Could share its victory.

For what was victory ? We had
Opposing views of that,
For Billy was an old line Whig,
And I a Democrat.

The tide of politics ran high
Among the village boys,
And those were truest patriots
Who made the greatest noise.

And who could higher toss his cap,
Or louder shout than I?
Till all the mountain echoes learnt
My party battle-cry!

One time—it was election morn,—
Beside the town-house door,
Among a troop of cheering boys,
I came on Billy More.

“Cheer on!” I called; “I would not give,
For your hurrahs, a fig;
But say, what do the Whigs believe?
Speak, Billy! you’re a Whig.”

And Bill said; “I don’t know nor care;
You needn’t ask me that;
You’d better tell me, if you can,
Why you’re a Democrat.”

And I commenced, in bold disdain,
“What? tell you if I can?
I? Why my father’s candidate
For second selectman.

“And he knows—I know—he knows—he—
I think—I feel—I—I—
I—I—I am a Democrat,—
And *that’s* the reason why.”

“Ha! ha!” the mocking shout that rose, —
I seem to hear it now,
And feel the hot, tumultuous blood
That crimsoned cheek and brow!

I might have spared my blushes then,
I should have kept my shame
For men, grown men, who fight to-day,
For just a party name!

This side or that, they cast their votes,
And pledge their faith, and why?
Go ask, and you will find them wise
As Billy More and I!



WAITING FOR THE MAY.

FROM out his hive there came a bee :

“Has spring-time come, or not?” said he.

Alone, within a garden-bed,

A small, pale snowdrop raised its head.

“’Tis March, this tells me,” said the bee ;

“The hive is still the place for me.

The day is chill, although ’tis sunny,

And icy cold this snowdrop’s honey.”

Again came humming forth the bee :

“What month is with us now?” said he.

Gay crocus-blossoms, blue and white

And yellow, opened to the light.

“It must be April,” said the bee.

“And April’s scarce the month for me.

I'll taste these flowers (the day is sunny),
But wait before I gather honey."

Once more came out the waiting bee:
" 'Tis come: I smell the spring!" said he.
The violets were all in bloom;
The lilac tossed a purple plume;
The daff'dill wore a yellow crown;
The cherry-tree a snow-white gown;
And by the brook-side, wet with dew,
The early wild wake-robins grew.
" It is the May-time!" said the bee,
" The queen of all the months for me!
The flowers are here, the sky is sunny:
'Tis now my time to gather honey!"



CHIMNEY-TOPS.

“A H! the morning is gray ;
And what kind of a day
Is it likely to be?”

“You must look up, and see
What the chimney-tops say.

“If the smoke from the mouth
Of the chimney goes south,
’Tis the north wind, that blows
From the country of snows :

Look out for rough weather ;
The cold and the north wind
Are always together.

"When the smoke pouring forth
From the chimney goes north,
A mild day it will be,
A warm time we shall see :
The south wind is blowing
From lands where the orange
And fig trees are growing.

"But, if west goes the smoke,
Get your water-proof cloak
And umbrella about :
'Tis the east wind that's out.
A wet day you will find it :
The east wind has always
A storm close behind it.

"It is east the smoke flies !
We may look for blue skies !
Soon the clouds will take flight,
'Twill be sunny and bright ;
The sweetest and best wind
Is, surely, that fair weather
Bringer, the west wind."



THE SWALLOW AND I.

THE lilacs are in blossom,
The cherry-flowers are white ;
I hear a sound above me,
A twitter of delight :
It is my friend the swallow,
As sure as I'm alive !
"I'm very glad to see you !
Pray, when did you arrive ?"

SWALLOW.

I'm very glad to get here ;
I only came to-day :

I was, this very morning,
A hundred miles away.

I.

It was a weary journey :
How tired you must be !

SWALLOW.

O, no ! I'm used to travelling,
And it agrees with me.

I.

You left us last September ;
And, pray, where did you go ?

SWALLOW.

I went South for the winter :
I always do, you know.

I.

The South ? How do you like it ?

SWALLOW.

I like its sunny skies ;
And, round the orange-blossoms,
I caught the nicest flies.
But, when the spring had opened,
I wanted to come back.

I.

You're still the same old swallow !
Your wings are just as black.

SWALLOW.

I always wear dark colors ;
I'm ever on the wing :
A sober suit for travelling
For me's the proper thing.

I.

Your little last year's nestlings —
Do tell me how they grow.

SWALLOW.

My nestlings are great swallows,
And mated long ago.

I.

And shall you build, this summer,
Among the flowers and leaves ?

SWALLOW.

No : I have taken lodgings
Beneath the stable eaves.
You'll hear, each night and morning,
My twitter in the sky.

I.

That sound is always welcome ;
And now good-by !

SWALLOW.

Good-by !

THE YELLOW CLOUD.

“**L**OOK up! There's just one cloud in sight, —
A yellow cloud as sunshine bright,
That, like a little golden boat,
Across the clear blue seems to float.
O! how I wish that cloud were ours,
The color of the cowslip-flowers,
And, sitting on it, you and I
Were gayly sailing round the sky!
O! wouldn't it be pleasant?
O! shouldn't we be proud
If we could only own it, —
That little yellow cloud?”

“As free as birds we then could go
Whatever way the wind might blow, —
Above the rivers gleaming bright,
Above the hills with snowdrifts white,
Upon the tree-tops looking down,
Upon the steeples of the town.
We should hear far below us
The great bells ringing loud.
O! don't you wish we owned it, —
That little yellow cloud?”

"Why wish for what will never be?
That little cloud is not for me ;
But if it were, and you and I
Were on it sailing round the sky,
Who knows? we might be wishing then,
'O, if we could get down again !'
'Tis better to be humble,
By far, than to be proud ;
And on the ground we're safer
Than sailing on a cloud."

WHAT WILL BECOME OF ME?

THE buds grew green upon the boughs, the grass upon the hills,

And violets began to bud by all the brimming rills ;
And a little brown sparrow came over the sea,
And another came flying his mate to be ;
And they wooed and they wed, and they built a nest,
In the place which they thought was the pleasantest.
"Though any spot's a pleasant one that's shared with you," said he.
"And any place where you may dwell is good enough for me,"
Said she, —
"Is good enough for me."

But when the nest was fairly built, the violets fully blown,
A wandering cuckoo chanced that way, and spied the nest alone ;
And she said to herself, "In the sunny spring,
To brood over a nest is a weary thing ;"
So she went on her journey to steal and beg,
But behind in the nest left a foundling egg.
And when the sparrow-wife came back, the egg, whose could it be?
"It is not mine," she said, "and yet it must belong to me ;
'Tis here,
And must belong to me."

So, full of patient mother-love, beneath her downy breast,
As fondly, gently as her own, the speckled egg she pressed,
Through the days with their marvelous unseen sights,
And the damp and the chill of the spring-time nights,
Until two little sparrows had burst the shell,
And the cuckoo had wakened to life as well.
His breast was bare, his wings were weak, his thoughts were
only three :

"What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo !
What will become of me?"

He opened wide his bill, and cried, and called for food all day,
And from his foster-brothers' beaks he snatched their share away.
"Were there one, only one, to be warmed and fed,
And if *I* were that one," to himself he said,
"Then the doting old birds would have nothing to do
But to wait and to tend upon me ! Cuckoo !
In such a close and narrow nest there is no room for three :
What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo !
What will become of me?"

He stretched his neck above the nest, he peered each way about,
If none could see, then none could say who pushed the nestlings
out ;

But the cuckoo was left in the nest alone,
And the share of his brothers was all his own,
And the sparrows were feeding him all day long,
And his feathers grew dark, and his wings grew strong,

And wearisome became the nest. "A stupid place!" said he.
"What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo!
What will become of me?"

The old birds called him to the bough, and taught him how to fly,
He spread his wings, and left them both without a last good-by;
And beyond the green meadow-lands wet with dew,
And the wood and the river, he passed from view.
And amid what scenes he may flit to-day,
Or his wings may rest, there is none to say;
But wheresoe'er that selfish heart, its thoughts are only three:
"What do I want? What can I have? What will become of me?
Cuckoo!
What will become of me?"

THE ROPE DANCER.

WHEN I was seven — O, it seems
A thousand years ago!
My sailor uncle took me out
To see a travelling show.
I wore, I can remember still,
A white cape with a plaited frill;
And, through the green fields, to the tent,
A proud and happy child, I went.

The usual dwarf, contrasted, stood,
Beside the giant, there,
And, to a squeaking fiddle, danced
A well instructed bear;
And yards of ribbon, pink and blue,
From out his throat a juggler drew;
But, when the last performance came,
It made these sights seem poor and tame.

For, lightly as a spider runs
Along the glistening thread,
Upon a slender rope, that stretched
High, high above my head,
A little girl tripped, to and fro,
And did not cast one glance below!

A girl? It rather seemed to me
That fresh from fairy-land was she !

She had a poppy colored skirt,
A gown of golden gauze,
And when she came back to the ground,
The tent rang with applause ;
Well pleased, she bowed and curt'sied then,
And went through all her feats again ;
Along the rope I saw her rise,
With throbbing heart, but envious eyes.

For, as I watched this elf, who seemed
Like Beauty's self, to me,
Of happy lots, the happiest,
I thought that hers must be ;
Since I, poor I, could never hope,
Like her, to walk upon a rope,
I felt, and felt that it was hard,
I was from life's best joy debarred !

But as, thus murmuring in my heart,
And filled with discontent,
Beside my uncle, with the crowd
That left the show, I went,
He pulled my sleeve, and whispered, "See !"
And, lo ! my fairy, close to me,
Was standing, speaking with the dwarf.
I looked, and wished her further off !

For, nearer seen, the face I thought
So fair, looked pinched and brown ;
Begrimed and frayed the scarlet skirt,
And stained the golden gown ;
How clean, I can remember still,
Beside it, seemed my cape's white frill !
I felt my wakened conscience stir,
To think how I had envied her !

And when, as we, together, home,
Walked down the field's green slope,
My uncle asked, "How would you like
To dance upon a rope,
And mount as high, and look as gay,
As did the girl we saw to-day?"
I only shook my little head,
And not one word, in answer, said.

WHO IS SHE?

THERE is a little maiden —
Who is she? Do you know? —
Who always has a welcome
Wherever she may go.

Her face is like the May-time,
Her voice is like a bird's;
The sweetest of all music
Is in her lightsome words.

The loveliest of blossoms
Spring where her light foot treads,
And most delicious odors
She all around her sheds —

The breath of purple clover
Upon the breezy hills;
The smell of garden roses
And yellow daffodils.

Each spot she makes the brighter,
As if she were the sun,
And she is sought and cherished
And loved by every one;

By old folks and by children,
By lofty and by low.
Who is this little maiden?
Does anybody know?

You surely must have met her —
You certainly can guess;
What! must I introduce her?
Her name is Cheerfulness.



LITTLE MOLLY.

THERE'S company coming, there's company coming,
There's company coming to tea!
So now, little Molly, lay by the big dolly,
And come and get ready with me.

I'll put on your dress that is braided with blue,
And tie on your shoes that are shining and new,

And curl up your locks like a princess's hair ;
And then you must sit yourself down in a chair,
As calm as a clock and as still as a mouse,
And wait till the company come to the house.
And when they appear, O ! be careful, my dear :
I can't allow any loud noise while they're here.
The books on the table be sure not to touch ;
And don't ask me questions : you mustn't talk much ;
And yet don't be shy and hide back of my chair,
And only look out with a pout and a stare.

Don't finger your beads like a vain little miss ;
And, if one should happen to ask for a kiss,
Don't, shrugging your shoulders, behave like a dunce,
But put up your lips, and go kiss him at once.

That's the suitable way for a maiden of three
To entertain visitors ! — chick-a-dee-dee !
So now, little Molly, lay by the big dolly,
And dress for our company tea !



CHICKEN LITTLE'S DUTY.

LOOK and see !
Underneath the lilac-tree
Mother Bantam walks with six
Little, downy, yellow chicks :
O, how pretty ! O, how small !
This one is the least of all.

“Chicken Little, Chicken Little,
Give to me an answer true :
What is your idea of duty ?
How does life appear to you ?”

“Peep, peep, peep !” says Chicken Little ,
“That is what I cannot tell ;
'Tis for me too hard a question :
I am just out of the shell ;

If I live to be a hen,
I perhaps can answer then.
Peep, peep, peep! you should not ask me:
All that I can do, to-day,
Is to mind my mother Bantam,
What she tells me to obey.
Peep, peep, peep! I know so little!
Peep, peep, peep! I am so small!
What is my idea of duty?
I have no ideas at all."

"Chicken Little! Chicken Little!
You are small, but you are true:
Just to mind your mother Bantam,
Is the best thing you can do;
That's the right idea of duty
For a little chick like you."

"Cluck, cluck, cluck!" says Mother Bantam,
Underneath the lilac-tree;
"Peep, peep, peep!" says Chicken Little,
As she hurries off from me.

THE PURPLE DOVE.

WITH trembling heart I followed
Where Jiminy led the way,
Up to the highest scaffold
Among the clover hay ;
There, where the dusty rafters
Our heads were close above,
• The treasure that we loved the best,
With rainbow neck and downy breast,
Stone dead, but faithful to her nest,
We found the purple dove ;
And " O ! " said Jim, and " O ! " said I,
And both of us sat down to cry.

My mood was April's ever,
But tears were few with Jim ;
It dignified my sorrow,
To have it shared by him.
He stroked the glossy feathers,
And smoothly made them lie ;
" 'Twas only yesterday she fed
From out my hand, and now she's dead ! "
" O Jim ! those pretty wings ! " I said ;
" To think they'll never fly !

It is too hard, — I cannot love,
I never can, another dove !”

And then I wept in earnest,
As if my heart would break,
As loud in lamentation
As mourners at a wake ;
While Jim his face, in silence,
Hid in the clover hay,
And would not once look up ; and so
We sat, how long I do not know
Till, “ Children ! ” called a voice below
We knew we must obey ;
And down again we came once more,
The dead dove in my pinafore.

The hyacinths in the garden
Were blooming pink and white ;
We made a grave among them,
And buried her from sight.
Since then our share of trouble
We’ve had, both Jim and I, —
The common pain that comes to all,
And special trials great and small —
But still, self-pitying, I recall
That grief of days gone by,
And those hot tears of childish love
Which fell upon the purple dove.

DRIVING THE COW.

THE grass is green on Billy's grave,
The snow is on my brow,
But I remember still the night
When we two drove the cow!
The buttercups and tangled weeds,
The goldfinch pecking thistle-seeds,
The small, green snake amid the brake,
The white flowers on the bough,
And Billy, with his keen, gray eyes, —
I seem to see them now!

O, Billy was my first of friends ;
Our hearts were warm and light ;
The darkest of November rains
Had, shared with him, seemed bright ;
And far too brief for boyish play
Had been the summer's longest day.
But powerless fell love's magic spell, —
Its charm was lost that night ;
It needed but one word, and we
Were both in for a fight.
One word ! 'twas Billy spoke that word ;
But, sore at heart, I know

It was another hand than his
That dealt the earliest blow.
He touched my forehead's longest curl,
And said, "Hey ! John ! my pretty girl !"
A jest or not, my blood was hot,
My cheek was all aglow ;
"Take that ! Take that ! Say, could a girl —
A girl have struck you so ?"

But Billy was as stout as I ;
The scar upon my brow
The memory of his prowess keeps
Before me even now !
His furious blows fell thick and fast ;
But just as I had thought, at last,
That yield I must, a skillful thrust
I gave, I know not how,
And, a triumphant conqueror,
I went on for my cow !

We never were firm friends again.
Before the spring-time air
Again the graveyard flowers made sweet,
Poor Billy rested there !
And I since then have wandered wide,
And seen the world on every side,
By land and sea, and learned — ah me ! —
That warm, true hearts are rare ;
And he who is best loved on earth
Has not one friend to spare !

DRIVING THE COW.

The grass is green on Billy's grave,
My brow is white with snow ;
I never can win back again
The love I used to know !
The past is past ; but, though for me
Its joys are sweet in memory,
'Tis only pain to call again
The feuds of long ago,
And worse to feel that in a fight
I dealt the earliest blow !

ANT-HILLS.

IN their small, queer houses,
Each one with a round,
Ever-open doorway
Leading under ground,

Living in my flower-bed,
Near my balsam plants,
Are, at least, a dozen
Families of ants.

Very neat and quiet
Working folks are they,
Cleaning house all summer,
From the first of May.

In and out their doorways,
Up and down they go,
Bits of earth and gravel
Bringing from below ;

Carrying the sand grains
From their rooms away,
Cleaning, cleaning, cleaning,
Every sunny day.

ANT-HILLS.

Labor is a blessing ;
But I really can't
Think it would be pleasant
To grow up an ant,

And be always busy,
Cleaning house each day,
All the pleasant summer,
From the first of May !

"SWEET HOME."

O SWIFT-FLYING swallow !
Dart down the green hollow,
And dip your black wings in the pool by the lane ;
The spring's blithest comer,
The sweet-smelling summer,
All decked with gay garlands, comes close in your train.

A light-hearted rover
You've been the world over ;
You've seen what I only can dream of — ah, me !
Great, cloud-mantled highlands,
And bright, flowery islands,
With gleaming shores washed by the warm southern sea ;

Broad streams seaward flowing,
Still lakes brightly glowing,
With blushes reflecting the morning's red mist ;
Or, weary, have rested
'Mid palms greenly crested,
Or white blooming citrons by wooing winds kissed !

No clime calls you "stranger ;"
A wide-welcomed ranger
In all of your journeyings under the sun,

What beauty most drew you,
What spot has seemed to you,
Of all earth's sweet places, the loveliest one?

And flying, still flying,
The swallow replying,
Said, "Truly, I've looked on earth's brightest and best ;
And dearest and fairest
Of all things, and rarest,
Beneath the barn eaves, is my clay-built nest !"

LITTLE ROSE.

A SONG.

O DON'T be in haste, little Rose! little Rose!
O, O, don't be in haste, little Rose!
Though the May is yet here,
Yet the June is more near
Than you, in your dreaming, suppose, little Rose!
Than you, in your dreaming, suppose.

O, don't be in haste, little Rose! little Rose!
O, don't be in haste, little Rose!
Though on yonder green bough,
Waits thy nightingale now,
With music he only bestows, little Rose!
With music he only bestows.

O, don't be in haste, little Rose! little Rose!
O, don't be in haste, little Rose!
For the world, it is rough,
And O, soon, soon enough
The wind for our withering blows, little Rose!
The wind for our withering blows.

GOOD FOR NOTHING.

CATERPILLAR, caterpillar,
On the apple-bough !
Tell me how you get your living :
Do you earn it, now ?

“Earn my living !” answers he :

“What a thing to ask of me ?

I for work was never made.

Spinning is the spider’s trade ;

Tugging ant and buzzing bee

Toiling all the day I see ;

I was born for higher things.

Soon, on red and yellow wings,

You will see me going by

As a splendid butterfly !

Work is something, I am sure,

That I never could endure.

I can crawl and I can eat.

Apple-leaves, when fresh, are sweet ;

And a pleasant place for me

Is this green, young apple-tree.”

Caterpillar, caterpillar,
On the apple-bough !
If you only earned your living,
I would spare you now.
What though apple-leaves are sweet ?
Those who work not should not eat ;
And you nevermore shall be
On my green, young apple-tree.

KITTY.

A LAS! little Kitty — do give her your pity! —
Had lived seven years, and was never called pretty!
Her hair was bright red, and her eyes were dull blue,
And her cheeks were so freckled,
They looked like the speckled
Wild lilies, which down in the meadow-lands grew.
If her eyes had been black, if she'd only had curls,
She had been, so she thought, the most happy of girls.

Her cousins around her, they pouted and fretted,
But they were all pretty and they were all petted;
While poor little Kitty, though striving her best
To do her child's duty,
Not sharing their beauty,
Was always neglected and never caressed.
All in vain, so she thought, was she loving and true,
While her hair was bright red, and her eyes were dull blue.

But one day, alone 'mid the clover-blooms sitting,
She heard a strange sound, as of wings round her flitting;
A light not of sunbeams, a fragrance more sweet
Than the wind's blowing over
The red-blossomed clover,
Made her thrill with delight from her head to her feet;

And a voice, sweet and rare, whispered low in the air, —
“See that beautiful, beautiful child sitting there!”

Thrice blessed little Kitty! She almost looked pretty!

Beloved by the angels, she needed no pity!

O juvenile charmers! with shoulders of snow,

Ruby lips, sunny tresses, —

Forms made for caresses, —

There's one thing, my beauties, 'tis well you should know, —

Though the world is in love with bright eyes and soft hair,

It is only *good* children the angels call fair.

THE CHERRY PIE.

'TIS late in May: what do I see?
White blossoms on my cherry tree?
"Ah, flowers!" say I,
"By next July
I'll make myself a cherry pie.
Hi ho! hi ho! well pleased, I see
White blossoms on my cherry tree."

'Tis rosy June: what do I see?
Green cherries on my cherry tree!
"Poor things!" say I;
"But, by and by,
They'll be fit for a cherry pie.
Hi ho! hi ho! well pleased, I see
Green cherries on my cherry tree."

'Tis warm July: what do I see?
Red cherries on my cherry tree!
"O! now," say I,
"The time draws nigh
For me to make my cherry pie.
Hi ho! hi ho! well pleased, I see
Red cherries on my cherry tree!"

But look again. What do I see!
Six robins on my cherry tree!

“Poor chance,” say I,

“Unless they fly,

I have to make my cherry-pie.
Hi ho! hi ho! ill pleased, I see
Six robins on my cherry tree.”

But once again: what do I see?
Leaves only on my cherry tree!

“Alas!” say I,

“I scarce can spy

One cherry for a cherry pie!
Hi ho! hi ho! ill pleased, I see
Leaves only on my cherry tree.”

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

CLOSE beside the meadow-wall,
Where the buttercups grow tall,
Underneath a blooming yarrow,
Is the nest of Mrs. Sparrow.

"What is in it?" Look and see:
Sparrow infants! one, two, three,
Snugly lying. All together
Scarce can show a single feather.

Blind their eyes, and weak their wings,
And they are such hungry things!
Peeping, peeping, peeping; keeping
Crying all the livelong day.

Mrs. Sparrow is no longer
Looking young and fresh and gay:
She is growing thin and worn;
She is busy, night and morn,
Bringing bugs and bringing berries,
Tempting worms and meadow cherries,
For these crying baby sparrows,
With their great throats stretching wide, —

For these noisy, little creatures
That are never satisfied.

In the bright days, by and by,
When these nestling birds shall fly,
Singing, winging, glad and blest,
Each one with a different nest, —
When all three shall live asunder, —
Will they keep a thought, I wonder,
Of that nest beneath the yarrow,
And the faithful Mrs. Sparrow?

NAMING THE BABY.

YOU have birds in a cage, and you've beautiful flowers.
But you haven't at your house what we have at ours ;
'Tis the prettiest thing that you ever did see,
Just as dear and as precious as precious can be ;
'Tis my own baby sister, just seven days old ;
And too little for any but grown folks to hold.
O, I know you would love her ; she's sweet as a rose,
And she has such a queer, tiny bit of a nose,
And the dearest and loveliest pink little toes,
Which, I tell mother, seem only made to be kissed ;
And she keeps her wee hand doubled up in a fist.
She is quite without hair, but she's beautiful eyes,
And she always looks pretty, except when she cries.
And what name we shall give her there's no one can tell,
For my father says Sarah, and mother likes Belle ;
And my great uncle John — he's an old-fashioned man —
Wants her named, for his wife that is dead, Mary Ann.
But the name I have chosen the darling to call
Is a name that is prettier far than them all ;
And to give it to baby my heart is quite set —
It is Violet Martha Rose Stella Marzette.

DICK AND I.

WHEN Dick was ten and I was eight,
Life's morning sweet and early,
When he wore aprons checked with blue,
And yet my hair was curly,
We used to read, the livelong day,
Strange tales and old romances ;
Dick liked the Indian stories best,
But I had softer fancies.

I clung to fairy tales, alas !
And books with yellow covers ;
I thought myself a heroine,
And went in search of lovers.
I made me wreaths of blooming flowers,
And spent my mornings crying ;
A bird, with head beneath my wing,
I fancied I was flying.

We read of war. It seemed to me
A thing how strange and distant !
I thought that Dick might learn to fight,
But I was non-resistant.
In my young heart, in those calm days
Of bright, unclouded weather,

Imps, soldiers, ogres, ghosts, and war
Were all linked in together.

We had one play called Bunker Hill, —
Dick always wished to play it ;
I liked dolls better, though, of course,
I was ashamed to say it.
Dick had a company of boys,
The name of one was Moses ;
I made him once a soldier's cap,
And trimmed it round with roses.

I followed in the ranks, myself,
Their only banner bearing ;
Dick fastened to my father's cane
The apron I was wearing.

How perfectly one day comes back,
When, roused by one another,
Poor Dick and Moses came to blows,
And I ran home to mother !
Dear, gentle heart ! Her ready hand
The cause of peace defended ;
She bribed both foes with gingerbread,
And so the battle ended.

O happy days, too briefly bright !
O memories quaint, but pleasant !
I cannot bear to link, to-day,
The glad past with the present !

My childhood's visions seem to mock
My lone heart sad and smitten ;
In dearer life-blood than my own
The page of war is written !

I know not where in death he sleeps ;
Far distant from each other,
I watched and wept, he fought and fell,
My brave and generous brother !
'Tis all we know. O, no ! not all, —
He died as heroes perish ;
He left a memory for our hearts
To fondly, proudly cherish.

O, even in my darkest hour,
One thought my sorrow hushes :
Thank God ! thank God ! we speak of him
With tears, and not with blushes.

THE LOST FLOWERS.

ROSY red the summer sky ;
Rosy red the fields below,
By the blooming clover tinged,
Painted by the sunset's glow ;
Rosy red the river's breast,
Softly rippling towards the west,
While beneath the willow's shade,
Happy though alone, I played.

Brighter was my childish dream
Than the river or the sky ;
Floating wild-flowers down the stream,
What companion needed I ?
Sending forth a fairy fleet
Of midsummer blossoms sweet !
Meadow lilies brown and gold,
Trailing wreaths of virgin's bower,
The red mulberry's crimson bloom,
Jewel weed and elder flower ;
Down the river's murmuring flow,
One by one, I watched them go,
Slowly drifting, till the last,
Lingering flower from sight had passed,

And the sky above grew gray,
Gray beneath the river grew,
While the damp, chill, evening mist
Hid the clover fields from view.

Empty-handed, half afraid,
Hastening homeward in the shade,
Sadly, vainly, wished I then,
"Would I had my flowers again!"

ONE SATURDAY.

I NEVER had a happier time,
And I am forty-three,
Than one midsummer afternoon,
When it was May with me ;
Life's fragrant May,
And Saturday,
And you came out with me to play ;
And up and down the garden walks,
Among the flowering beans,
We proudly walked and tossed our heads,
And played that we were queens.

Thrice prudent sovereigns, we made
The diadems we wore,
And fashioned for our royal hands,
The sceptres which they bore ;
But good Queen Bess
Had surely less
Than we, of proud self-consciousness,
While wreaths of honey-suckle hung
Around your rosy neck,
And tufts of marigold looped up
My gown, a "gingham check."

Our chosen land was parted out,
Like Israel's, by lot ;
My kingdom, from the garden wall
Reached to the strawberry plot ;
The onion bed,
The beet-tops red,
The corn which waved above my head,
The gooseberry bushes hung with fruit,
The wandering melon-vine,
The carrots and the cabbages,
All, all of them were mine !

Beneath the cherry tree was placed
Your throne, a broken chair ;
Your realm was narrower than mine,
But it was twice as fair :
Tall hollyhocks,
And purple phlox,
And time observing four-o'clocks,
Blue lavender and candytuft,
And pink and white sweet peas,
Your loyal subjects, waved their heads
In every passing breeze.

O ! gay and prosperous was our reign
Till we were called to tea ;
But years, since then, have come and gone,
And I am forty-three !
Yet, journeying
On rapid wing,
Time has not brought, and cannot bring,

For you or me, a happier day
Than when among the beans
We proudly walked, and tossed our heads,
And fancied we were queens.

THE ORANGE BUTTERFLY.

THE primer class was out at three,
And home from school I sauntered slow,
A six-years' maiden, proud to be
Permitted all alone to go.
Beside the road a milk-weed grew,
Gray leaved, and round its stalk a whorl
Of scented flowers, that downward hung
With hues of purple and of pearl ;
Where, sipping of their honey, clung
The loveliest of lovely things —
A butterfly with orange wings ;
“ O ! if ” — it seemed a thing too high
To dare to wish — “ if only I
Could own,” I thought, “ that butterfly ! ”

Yet I reached out my hand : “ Who knew ?
It might — perhaps it might — be won ! ”
Away, like Hope, the tempter flew,
Just far enough to lure me on ;
I flung my worthless primer by,
And followed where the rover led,
Beside the road, now down, now up,
From thistle bloom to clover head,

And buttercup to buttercup.
Across the wall I saw it flit,
And I went clambering after it,
And climbing fell ; but what cared I ?
I, falling, clutched a weed close by,
And, lo ! I'd caught the butterfly !

Mine ! Was it really mine at last ?
It was too blissful to be true !
I held it tight, I held it fast ;
The very world seemed made anew,
And I, its little empress, kept
Its choicest treasure in my grasp.
I waited long ; at length, with care,
I dared my fingers to unclasp ;
What matchless wonder had I there ?
A worm with wings too bruised to crawl,
Some orange dust, and that was all.
All ! underneath the summer sky,
Life's emblematic child, sat I,
And wept o'er that dead butterfly !

THE CLOVER FIELD.

WANDER with the wild wind, go the wide world over,
Where 's a sight so lovely as a field of clover?
When 'tis in its purple prime,
Just before the mowing time ;
When the summer air is sweetest, and the bobolinks are singing,
And on every other dewy top a honey-bee is swinging ;
Colored like the blushing cloud, the sunset hanging over,
Fragrant as—what 's half so sweet as is a field of clover ?

Hither, thither, flitting, restless as a swallow,
Seeking what is fairest, Pleasure's beck'ning follow ;
Crested palm trees towering high,
Lakes where starry lilies lie ;
Stately woods and sunny vineyards, hill-sides robed in blooming
heather,
Orange groves where fruit and blossoms hang upon the boughs
together :
See the best the world can show to a world-wide rover, —
Can you find a sweeter sight than a field of clover ?

TAG.

SUMMER snow the elder boughs
On the green grass sprinkle!
'Tis the pasture; Brindle's bell —
Can't you hear it tinkle?
Now we may be free as air, —
This is just the place!
We're the very company! —
Let us have a race!
Tag! tag!
Follow me! follow!
After me! chase me! come Billy and Mag!
Swift seem my feet as the wings of a swallow!
What is so merry as playing at tag?

Blackberry vine and elder flower,
Buttercup and sorrel,
Ox-eye daisies, rosy crown
Of the mountain laurel,
With their colors blurred and blent,
How they hurry by!
Hark! a step is close behind!
Faster I must fly!
Tag! tag!

On through the clover !
Here runs the brook through the fern and the flag !
After me ! after me ! over it ! over !
What is so merry as playing at tag ?

Yonder maple is our goal —
Would that it were nearer !
Mag is just upon me now —
Panting I can hear her !
Startled hare or hunted deer
Never swifter ran !
Pleasure is as fleet as Fear—
Catch me if you can !
Tag ! tag !
Give me a minute !
Since I am caught 'neath this alder bush, Mag !
Let us take breath e'er again we begin it.
What is so merry as playing at tag ?

THE POPPY-HEAD.

BESIDE my door, in April hours,
I made a little bed for flowers,
And roots and slips, with tender care,
And many seeds, I planted there.
But now in summer's golden glow,
What have I for my pains to show?
A single blossom in the bed —
A common, scarlet poppy-head !

My English daisies, rosy-tipped,
And tulips, by the frost were nipped ;
My heart's-ease from a sun-stroke died ;
A cut-worm ate my mourning bride ;
And Tommy's speckled hen scratched up
My pink and double buttercup ; —
There's nothing left to deck the bed,
Except this scarlet poppy-head.

But why should I complaining sit ?
I ought to make the best of it.
My poppy is a pleasant sight ; —
In its red cloak it looks as bright
As if it from the fire-place came,
And all its leaves were made of flame ;

Of all the thousand flowers that blow,
Where's one that makes a finer show?
Where's one that's gayer than my red,
Tall, nodding, handsome poppy-head?

And though it by itself has grown,
And though to-day it stands alone,
Within its green top, hid from sight,
Five hundred seeds lie, milky white.
They will grow ripe, and brown, and dry,
As summer's sunny days go by ;
I mean to gather them next fall ;
I mean to keep and sow them all ;
And if, next year, you visit me,
Within my garden you will see
Five hundred poppies, flaming red,
All children of this poppy-head !

THE SONG OF THE BEE.

BUZZ-Z-Z-Z-Z, buzz !
This is the song of the bee.
His legs are of yellow ;
A jolly good fellow,
And yet a great worker, is he.

In days that are sunny,
He's getting his honey ;
In days that are cloudy,
He's making his wax :
On pinks and on lilies,
And gay daffodillies,
And columbine blossoms,
He levies a tax !

Buzz-z-z-z-z-z, buzz !
The sweet-smelling clover,
He, humming, hangs over ;
The scent of the roses
Makes fragrant his wings :
He never gets lazy ;
From thistle and daisy,
And weeds of the meadow,
Some treasure he brings.

Buzz-z-z-z-z, buzz !
From morning's first gray'light
Till fading of day'light,
He's singing and toiling
 The summer day through.
O, we may get weary,
And think work is dreary :
'Tis harder, by far,
 To have nothing to do !

THE TOAD IN SEARCH OF A SUPPER.

'TIS too dark to see quite clear—
Who is this that's coming here?
Hop, hop, hop! 'Tis really you!
Mr. Toad, how do you do?

Mr. Toad, he makes a bow:
"Hop, hop, hop! I'm travelling now.
If my home you wish to see,
You at noon must visit me.

"'Tis a hole within the ground,
By the grass grown all around:
Cool and calm, 'tis there I stay
Through the warmest of the day.
But I sometimes go and dine
Underneath the melon-vine.
Bugs and worms, my favorite fare,
I can find to feed on there,
While the leaves and blossoms bright
Hide me from the burning light.

"Noon-time journeys are unwise;
Too much sunlight hurts my eyes:

But when day at last is through,
And the cooling drops of dew
On the clover blossoms fall,
On the fern leaves green and tall —
Hop, hop, hop! then I come out,
And begin to look about,
As I'm doing now, you see ;
So you must not hinder me !

“Hop, hop, hop! a worm I spy!
Hop, hop, hop! I see a fly!
I must catch him ; so good-by.”

Hop, hop, hop! away he goes,
And the shadows round him close.

THE OAK.

THE oak-tree boughs once touched the grass ;
But every year they grew
A little farther from the ground,
And nearer toward the blue.

So live that you each year may be,
While time glides swiftly by,
A little farther from the earth,
And nearer to the sky.

VAIN COUNSELS.

COME, fairest of cherubs,
And sit on my knee ;
You're surely as lovely
As lovely can be !

Be shy of your blushes ;
If spied by the rose,
She might lose her petals
From envy — who knows ?

And all the tall lilies
Would wilt with dismay
On seeing your shoulders
Far whiter than they.

On pansies and poppies
You smile in disdain ;
But beauty is nothing, —
You mustn't be vain.

One kiss ! Not such nectar
The humming-bird sips ; —
Soul sweetness, heart honey
I draw from your lips !

VAIN COUNSELS.

You're fairer than fairies ;
You're sweeter than flowers ;
You're all that 's bewitching ;
And then — you are *ours* !

Of queens the most charming,
Triumphant you reign !
What ! Think you are pretty ?
You *mustn't* be vain !

.

TWO PICTURES.

A N old farm-house, with meadows wide,
And sweet with clover on each side ;
A bright-eyed boy, who looks from out
The door with woodbine wreathed about,
And wishes his one thought all day, —
“O, if I could but fly away
From this dull spot the world to see,
How happy, happy, happy,
How happy I should be !”

Amid the city's constant din,
A man, who round the world has been,
Who, 'mid the tumult and the throng,
Is thinking, thinking all day long, —
“O, could I only tread once more
The field-path to the farm-house door,
The old green meadows could I see,
How happy, happy, happy,
How happy I should be !”

THE EGOTIST BLOSSOM.

WAKING the blossoms as it passed,
The summer wind went by ;
A flax flower opened at its touch,
And looked up towards the sky.

"A royal thing am I," it said ;
"Though earth my light receives,
The very firmament reflects
The color of my leaves !"

Ah, foolish little egotist !
When fell the evening dew,
It only bathed a flowerless stem,
And scattered leaves of blue !

But still, as calmly over all
Looked down the glorious sky,
As gayly whispering to the flowers,
The summer wind went by ;—

As sweetly sang the joyous birds,
As fragrant was the air,
As brightly bloomed its sister flowers,
As if it had been there.



THE GARDEN THIEF.

THE plums are bitten on the bough !
Who has been in the garden now ?
All black the melon vines have turned,
As if a fire their leaves had burned !

The flowers are dead, — the poppies red,
And sun-flowers, tall and yellow !
There must have been a thief about, —
Some mischief-making fellow !
I've taken care that every night
The garden gate was fastened tight ;
Too high to climb is built the wall ;
Beneath it there's no place to crawl.

THE GARDEN THIEF.

How did he manage to get in ?
And, pray, who could the rogue have been ?

Alas ! I know him to my cost ;
He is no other than Jack Frost !
A rogue so sly that no one knows
What way he comes or how he goes.

He 's still but bold ; with fingers cold,
The pretty flowers he pinches,
And sends off, shivering, to the South,
The blue-birds and the finches.

But in one way a friend is he
To all the squirrels, and to me ;
He opens wide the burs, and down
He drops the chestnuts, ripe and brown.
Come, bring your baskets ! Come away !
We'll seek the chestnut woods to-day.

THE OWL'S STORY.

TU-WHIT, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
It may be false, it may be true —

A story to make cheeks grow pale —
A mournful, but a moral tale.
All fretful souls will quake with fear
When they its dreadful words shall hear ;
But cheerful hearts will read it through,
And only smile ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
I was a little maid like you !
My hair, like yours, was chestnut brown,
Round cheeks, like spring pinks, falling down ;
My father's favorite child was I,
And he a baron proud and high ;
Beloved, caressed, I nothing knew
Of want or care ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
When clouds were dark, or skies were blue,
The livelong day I used to fret ;
My eyes with tears were always wet ;
With costly dress and jewels rare,
But pouting lips and sulky air,

More peevish every day I grew,
More hard to please ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
Unblessed, but swift, the seasons flew,
Till came, at last, one fateful day —
My childhood's nurse must go away.
Loud I was crying as she went,
Not from regret, but discontent.
She turned — they seemed to look me through,
Her keen, black eyes ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
Reproachful words to me were new :
'Ah, dearest miss," she said, " beware !
Be kind to all, and walk with care ;
If thus you fret, and pout, and scowl,
You'll surely turn into an owl."
An owl ! I could not think them true —
Those frightful words ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
Her warning speech away I threw,
And loud and long I fretted still,
Whatever chanced to cross my will ;
But lo ! one morn, as I was dressed,
I saw distinctly, on my breast,
Some little snow-white feathers grew —
What could they mean ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
My red dress hid them all from view.
A gloomier face than e'er before,
A more forbidding frown I wore.
The servants shrank from me with fear,
The house-dog fled when I came near ;
My parents knew not what to do
To change my mood ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
Three nights from thence the fire burned blue,
And sitting by, I felt a strange,
Mysterious sense of dreadful change.
To break the spell I tried to speak —
My mouth was changed into a beak !
One cry alone went ringing through
The gilded halls, — “ Tu-whit, to-whoo ! ”

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
In such a place the cry was new.
With startled eyes and frightful din,
The servants all came rushing in ;
“ An owl ! an owl ! ” I heard them shout ;
“ An owl ! an owl ! Quick ! drive it out ! ”
Straight through the open door I flew,
A thing forlorn ! Tu-whit to-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
My nurse's prophecy was true !
Barn mice and moths are now my fare ;
The light of day I cannot bear ;

My home is but the hollow tree,
And no one thinks or cares for me ;
From early dawn to sunset dew
I hide from sight ! Tu-whit, tu-whoo !

Tu-whit, to-whoo ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !
Could I begin my life anew,
Whatever ills befell my way,
I'd always wear the smile of May.
I'd never fret, nor pout, nor scowl —
A child is happier than an owl !
But now, alas ! what can I do !
Woe, woe is me ! Tu-whit, to-whoo !

LITTLE SORROW.

A MONG the thistles on the hill,
In tears sat little Sorrow ;
"I see a black cloud in the west :
 'Twill bring a storm to-morrow ;
And when it storms where shall I be ?
And what will keep the rain from me ?
 Woe's me !" said little Sorrow.

"But now the air is soft and sweet,
 The sun is bright," said Pleasure ;
"Here is my pipe ; if you will dance,
 I'll wake my merriest measure ;
Or, if you choose, we'll sit beneath
The red rose-tree, and twine a wreath ;
 Come, come with me !" said Pleasure.

"O, I want neither dance nor flowers !
 They're not for me," said Sorrow,
"When that black cloud is in the west,
 And it will storm to-morrow ;
And if it storms what shall I do ?
I have no heart to play with you ;
 Go, go !" said little Sorrow.

But lo! when came the morrow's morn,
The clouds were all blown over ;
The lark sprang singing from his nest
Among the dewy clover,
And Pleasure called, "Come out and dance!
To-day you mourn no evil chance —
The clouds have all blown over!"

"And if they have, alas! alas!
Poor comfort that!" said Sorrow;
"For if to-day we miss the storm,
'Twill *surely* come to-morrow,
And be the fiercer for delay:
I am too sore at heart to play;
Woe's me!" said little Sorrow.

AUTUMN DAYS.

FIRE! fire! upon the maple bough
The red flames of the frost!
Fire! fire! by burning woodbine, see,
The cottage roof is crossed!
The hills are hid by smoky haze;
Look, how the road-side sumachs blaze,
And on the withered grass below,
The fallen leaves like bonfires glow!

Come, let us hasten to the woods
Before the sight is lost;
For few and brief the days when burn
The red fires of the frost;
When loud and rude the north wind blows,
The ruddy splendor quickly goes;
But now, hurrah! those days are here,
The best and loveliest of the year!

THE KITE.

THE morning sky was brightest blue,
Without a cloud in sight ;
The wind came shouting from the west, —
“Come out and fly your kite !”

And quick to hear the call, and glad
To answer it, was I ;
My heart struck up a dancing-tune,
And played it in reply.

Like honey-bees about their queen,
Each eager for the sight,
Round me the neighbors' children swarmed —
’Twas I that owned the kite.

We all went up the village hill,
And, freed upon the breeze,
My kite, a wingless bird, rose high
Above the walnut trees.

Our pleasure knew no bounds ; we shrieked
Like swallows with delight ;

Our very souls seemed in the air,
And fluttering with the kite.

But joy at best is wont to be,
Alas, a giddy thing !
My head was turned with happiness,
And I let go the string.

Up, up, my kite yet higher sprung,
Before the wind it flew !
My hold on it was gone — it seemed
Too dreadful to be true !

But true it was. With streaming tail,
We saw it overhead,
The autumn meadows hurrying past,
And maples burning red.

At last it vanished from our sight,
And we went home forlorn —
We who had come so gayly forth
On that eventful morn.

O, dearly I the wisdom bought,
With sorrow, not with gold,
That pleasures we would keep, we must
Be careful how we hold.



THE RUDE PLAYMATE.

“**O**AK-LEAF and maple-leaf!” hear the wind call:
“Beech-leaf and willow-leaf, flutter and fall!
Red leaves and yellow leaves, orange and brown,
Dance on the shaken boughs, dance, and come down!
I’ll be your playfellow; careless and gay,
We will keep sporting through all of the day:
Up in the air or about on the ground,
Merrily, merrily whirling around,
Hither and thither, wherever I blow,
Over the hills and the fields you shall go.

“Red leaves and yellow leaves, flutter and fall!
Come to me, come to me!” hear the wind call.
Fair are his promises. Off from the bough,
Down comes a pretty red maple-leaf now.
Poor little thing! By to-night it will be
Wishing again it were back on the tree.
Rude is the wild wind, and rough is his play;
Hardest of labor is sporting all day.

MARIAN MORSE.

WHAT shall my greeting be? what shall I say?
Poor little rosy-tinged child of a day!

Words are too noisy, and kisses would crush;
Lower my welcoming whisper I hush.
Nothing about you is certain. The hue
Of your young eyes — is it hazel or blue?
On your wee head will the soft little down
Change into tresses of auburn or brown? —
Flaxen or raven, or sun-lighted gold?
Everything, little one, waits to be told!
Really, for words I am quite at a loss, —
Dear little minikin — Marian Morse!

What shall I call thee that's cherished and blest?
Birdling, asleep in a love-guarded nest?
Rose-bud, with ruby leaves hidden from sight,
Shut from the breezes and dew-drops and light?
Bud that will turn to a blossom ere long,
Birdling, that soon will be trilling a song,
Baby, that soon will to womanhood grow,
Blessings be round you wherever you go!
Never may shadow your sunny way cross,
Angels watch over you, Marian Morse!

THE YEAR'S LAST FLOWER.

WITCH-HAZEL bough! Witch-hazel bough!
Strange time it seems to blossom now!

The sky is gray, the birds have flown,
With rustling leaves the ground is strown;
The May-time, with her cowslip crown,
Sweet Summer, showering rose-leaves down,
The Autumn days, a bannered train,
With colors like the flag of Spain,—
Have come and gone, without the power
To win from thee a single flower!
But now, when woods and fields are bare,
And chill with coming snow the air,
All wreathed with spring-like bloom art thou,
All decked with gold, Witch-hazel bough!

Witch-hazel bough! Witch-hazel bough!
Could I believe old stories now,
Within my hand, were I a witch,
Thou had'st the power to make me rich;
To prove a true divining rod,
And show where, under stone or sod,
Or growing tree, or running brook,
I should for hidden treasure look!

A child, I sought thy charm to try,
But woe is me ! no witch am I ;
For never gleam of elfin gold
'Twas my good fortune to behold ;
No magic dwells in me, or thou
Hast lost thy spell, Witch-hazel bough !

Witch-hazel bough ! Witch-hazel bough !
Though wizards' arts are powerless now,
A high resolve, a steadfast will,
A fearless heart, work wonders still ;
To find and win a needful store
Of goods and gold, and wisdom's lore,
The true divining-rods for me,
Henceforth must toil and patience be !
Then welcome, honest Labor ! Thou
Shalt bloom unplucked, Witch-hazel bough !

TWO HEARTS CONTENT.

UPON the red rose tree, among
The sweet June flowers, a sparrow sung
A little psalm of love and praise ;
“How sweet,” sang he, “these summer days !
For me the meadow strawberry grows !
To rock my nest the south wind blows !
And all my life is glad and free ! —
But this a dreary spot would be,
If one should linger here, forlorn,
When summer and the flowers were gone !”

Upon a bough, with frost-wreaths hung,
And glittering ice, a snow-bird swung,
And chirped his little song of praise ;
“How bright,” sang he, “these wintry days !
How merrily the north winds blow !
How gently falls the pure, white snow !
And all around makes fair to see ! —
But this a dreary spot would be,
If one should linger here, forlorn,
When winter and the snow were gone !”



THE NORTH WIND.

HARK! hark! Tell me who is there,
Growling like a grizzly bear!
'Tis the north wind out once more:
Hurry in, and shut the door!
Build a fire, and hear him roar!

THE NORTH WIND.

Should you dare to venture out,
He would pinch your cheeks, no doubt ;
He would give your ears a cuff :
He is loud and bold and rough ;
He is mischievous enough.

All the ground is frozen hard :
See the great elm in the yard,
How its boughs he bends and breaks !
What a dreadful sound he makes !
Why, the very house he shakes !

"North wind, North wind, stop this din !
We've no wish to let you in."
Nobody, indeed, enjoys
Winter winds or little boys,
When they make too loud a noise.



THE WINTER ROSE.

ALL the trees are leafless,
And the north wind roars.
I've one little rose-bush
That I keep in-doors :
Close beside my window,
In a box it grows.
Rose-bush, rose-bush, won't you
Give to me a rose?

When the spring comes, bringing
Pinks and violets blue,
You'll be scarcely needed :
Now's the time for you.
Now, when all around us
Lie the drifted snows,
Rose-bush, rose-bush, won't you
Give to me a rose?

I have brought you water,
Set you in the light,

THE WINTER ROSE.

Kept a fire to make you
Warm enough at night :
You've been kindly tended,
Everybody knows.
Rose-bush, rose-bush, won't you
Give to me a rose ?

Ah ! I see a tiny
Bud upon your bough.
There's a pretty blossom
Growing for me now !
Thank you, little rose-bush,
Now, before it blows,
Thank you, little rose-bush,
For the coming rose.



THE WHITE KITTEN.

MY little white kitten 's asleep on, my knee ;
As white as the snow or the lilies is she ;
She wakes up with a purr
When I stroke her soft fur :
Was there ever another white kitten like her ?

My little white kitten now wants to go out
And frolic with no one to watch her about ;
" Little kitten," I say,
" Just an hour you may stay,
And be careful in choosing your places to play."

But night has come down when I hear a loud " mew " ;
I open the door and my kitten comes through ;
My white kitten ! ah me !
Can it really be she, —
This ill-looking and beggar-like cat that I see ?

What ugly gray streaks on her side and her back !
Her nose, once as pink as a rose-bud, is black !
O, I very well know,
Though she does not say so,
She has been where white kittens ought never to go.

If little good children intend to do right,
If little white kittens would keep themselves white,
 It is needful that they
 Should this counsel obey,
And be careful in choosing their places to play.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE red lights of the frozen North
Streamed up the starlit blue,
And, in their rosy radiance, talked
The Old Year and the New ;
The Old Year gray, and bent with care,
And shivering in the icy air ;
The New, a boy with beardless cheek,
Eager to act, and quick to speak,
Who, breaking his own joyous song,
Said : " Brighter days come in !
Time's glorious victory over wrong,
Shall with my reign begin.
Sharing their secrets, I will walk
With Knowledge and with Art,
Yet seek with fervent love to thrill
The world's slow pulsing heart.
Fairer than all the way before
Will be the path I tread ;
And the great works which I shall do,
Will live, when I am dead,
Immortally to light and cheer
The souls of men." The sad Old Year
Shook his gray head, and said : " Beware !
I once gave promises as fair,

And made as idle boasts as you ;
But, when our course in life is run,
The humblest good which we *have done*,
Is more of solace than the best,
And bravest deeds, we *meant* to do."

